

City of Freeport
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

City Hall Council Chambers
July 23, 2020, 6:00pm

1. Meeting Called to Order

The July 23, 2020 City of Freeport City Regular City Council Meeting was called to Order at 6:00PM by Mayor Russ Barley. The meeting was held in City Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, Councilman Eddie Farris, and Councilman Mark Martin.

Staff Present: City Attorney Clay Adkinson, City Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Utility Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, City Clerk Malani Robinson.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Due to an error in scheduling the following changes were made to the Agenda: Continued to point 6 of the Agenda.

The Mayor recognized guest Brian Michie, The Freeport High School assistant principal.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills (Tab 1)
- b. Revenue and Expenditure Report through June 2020 (Tab 2)
- c. Special Council Meeting Minutes July 7, 2020 (Tab 3)

4. Public Comment on Consent Agenda- none.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

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BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Martin. Seconded by: Councilman Farris. All ayes: motion carried.

6. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

- Councilwoman Brannon added discussion item Special Events and Benefit fundraisers.
- Finance Officer Sara Bowers set next Budget Workshop and approval of the check signers.
- City Attorney Adkinson asked that Set Budget Workshop and Finance Tab 5 be held until after 6:30PM, due to an error in scheduling on the public website and public notices.

7. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Mayor Barley sought approval for additions/deletions of the meeting's agenda.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilwoman Brannon. Seconded by: Councilwoman Green. All ayes: motion carried.

8. Staff Reports

- a. **Water-** none
- b. **Sewer-**none
- c. **Parks/Projects-**none
- d. **City Clerk-**none
- e. **Billing**
 - i. **Updates-** Utility Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council that there were 53 delinquent accounts that had reached the 90 day past due period: only 3 responses. The Council reviewed the following methods used to notify the delinquent account holders: letters, phone calls, door hangers, and bill inserts. Council Members also inquired as to whether there were any new complaints or concerns

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from the public regarding the new commercial rates going into effect. A plan of action to remedy the accounts was discussed, late fees would begin in the new billing cycle.

f. Planning

- ii. **April Court Abandonment (Tab 6)**- Clarification on the size of the abandonment and why it was being abandoned was discussed. City Attorney Adkinson was requested to give legal counsel on the process of abandonment, he declined due to legalities of a public hearing. City Director Hughes-Neel asked for permission to set a public hearing for the second meeting in August and to place a ¼ ad in the newspaper.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Martin. Seconded by: Councilman Farris. All ayes: motion carried.

- iii. **Garrett SSA/1st Reading-Advertise for 2nd Reading (Tab 7)** City Director Hughes-Neel explained the request. For the current owner to redevelop the property to maintain his business the zoning would need to be consistent with the actual property use.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Farris. Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes: motion carried.

- iv. **Garrett RZ/1st Reading-Advertise for 2nd Reading (Tab 7)** City Director Hughes Neel explained the request.
- v. **Bluffs LSA-2nd Reading-Adoption (Tab 8)** – City Director Hughes-Neel presented draft and map. Requested that the zoning be changed to urban development. owner may have to relocate ; however, the zoning would remedy this and allow continued use of the property in the same way it is currently being used.

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BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Farris. Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes: motion carried.

vi. Bluffs RZ-2nd Reading-Adoption (Tab 9)

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilwoman Brannon. Seconded by: Councilman Farris. All ayes: motion carried.

- vii. Riverwalk-Portion of Plat Vacated (Tab 10) – Mr.Bob McGill** clarified the reasonings for coming before the Freeport City Council with a proposal for vacating a portion of the plat. To accommodate better traffic flow and to create transitional use the portion of the plat would be vacated.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilwoman Brannon. Seconded by: Councilwoman Green. All ayes: motion carried.

- viii. Update-Restore Act Funding (Tab 11) -The City** was awarded \$250,000 in grant funding, and it is now available to be released. The Council asked for clarification on oversight and allocation of the funds by Walton County. City Director Hughes-Neel proposed that Mrs.Gates (Walton Co. Restore Act Manager) come speak to the Freeport City Council at the next meeting to explain the technicalities of releasing the funds.

- 9. Recognition of Guests—Ms. Walton County, Ms.DeFuniak Springs and Ms. Freeport Queens photo –** As ambassadors the Walton County Queens from the city of Defuniak Springs and Freeport had a photo-op with the City Council Members. Mayor Barley also recognized “Mr.Boots” McCormick a candidate for Walton County Commissioner, as he entered the meeting.

- 10. Clayton Bloom-Requesting water bill adjustment (Tab12) – Utility Billing Manager Roberts** informed the Council that Mr.Bloom had a water

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leakage that occurred across two billing cycles therefore he was requesting a second leak adjustment.

11. Legal

- i. **Resolution to Provide Updated Information, as of July 31, 2020, to Ordinance 98-4** -City Attorney Adkinson requested an extension on the notice; unable to get ads out in a timely manner.

12. Finance

- i. **Approval to advertise for Interim Financing on the WWTP (Tab 4) –**

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Farris. Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes: motion carried.

- ii. **Set tentative millage and first public hearing date (Tab 5) –**
Motion to have the millage rate remain the same at 4.7302.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Martin. Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner. All ayes: motion carried.

- iii. Motion to set the first Public Hearing date Workshop to Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 5:05 PM.

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Farris. Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner. All ayes: motion carried.

- iv. Motion to set the next Budget Workshop Date for Thursday August 6, 2020 at 5:30 PM

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilwoman Brannon. Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner. All ayes: motion carried.

- v. Motion to establish the three approved check signers as Mayor Barley, City Councilman President Farris, and City Clerk Robinson.

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BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilwoman Haffner. Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes: motion carried.

13. Old Business

- a. **City Manager Ordinance revision- First Reading-** City Attorney Adkinson presented revisions for the City Manager Ordinance 2019-11. Recommendations:
- i. Create a new section-2-44 Subsection 5, providing for a waiver of qualifications in temporary hiring scenarios.
 - ii. Amending Chapter 2 Administrative Article III Officers & Employees, Division 1 City Manager, Section 2-45 duties to delete a reference in Subsection G to a non-existing department.

City Attorney Adkinson requested a motion to hold first reading ordinance

BOARD ACTION: Motioned by: Councilman Farris. Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes: motion carried.

- b. City Council Members and City Attorney Adkinson deliberated on the role, contract, and employment of the City Manager position. City Attorney Adkinson discussed possible issues with the current ordinance and sought direction from the City Council Members. Mayor Barley, City Attorney Clay, and Candidate Simmons were appointed to discuss the new employment contract and to present it to the City Council for approval at the following meeting. There were concerns regarding salary expectations, however it was agreed that no contract would be finite without the City Council's approval.

BOARD ACTION: The motion for City Attorney Adkinson, Mayor Barley, and Candidate Simmons to discuss and draft the employment contract was voted on a 4:1. (Ayes: Councilman Martin, Councilman Farris, Councilwoman Brannon. Councilwoman Haffner) (Nay: Councilwoman Green)

Pending List

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Assigned	Project	Update/Information
Attorney	City Council Districts	Attorney/Project Manager working with Supervisor of Elections
Project Manager	Road Agreement with Walton County and Hammock Bay/Ashton Park/Laurel Oaks Roads	Placed under Project Manager at 3/10/20 RCM
Finance Officer/Council	Forensic Audit	Updated 3/4/20
City Clerk	Agenda Software	Update 6/9/20
Planning Director /Engineering	SRTS Grant Phase II	Update 6/9/20
Planning Director /Engineering /City Manager	Main Street Program	Authorized by FCC to research and report 6/9/20
Engineering	DEO Community Planning & Technical Assistance Grant	Authorized by FCC 5/28/20
Project Manager/ Sheriff's Dept.	Traffic Calming for North Street	Tasked by Council 6/9/20
Planning Director	Education Reimbursement Program	Tasked 6/25/20

14. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

- i. Use of City Logo by School District in Freeport -**
Freeport High School Assistant Principal McGill inquired usage of the city logo on potential t-shirt sales to raise funds for student extracurricular activities (cheerleaders). The issue of trademark violations was presented by City Council Members and City Attorney Adkinson. Assistant

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Principal McGill explored alternative ideas for usage of the logo. City Councilwoman Brannon and City Councilwoman Green offered support for future fundraising endeavors. City Director Hughes-Neel offered to get the trademarking information to Assistant Principal McGill in support of the logo usage.

- ii. **City Council Meeting Aug 11 will need to be moved to County Board Room due to early voting-** Mayor Barley noted that he arrangements to use the Board of County Commissioners Boardroom at their Freeport location had already been secured.

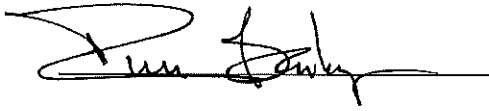
- b. **Councilwoman Brannon** – asked that the Special Events ordinance be reexamined for governmental overreach. The City Council discussed governance vs community compassion. The Council agreed to reevaluate the policy, City Director Hughes-Neel was instructed to bring the Resolution to the following meeting.
- c. **Councilman Farris-** none.
- d. **Councilwoman Green-** none.
- e. **Councilwoman Haffner-** none.
- f. **Councilman Martin-** none.

15. Public Comment- none.

16. Adjournment – Mayor Barley made the motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Councilman Farris. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 PM.

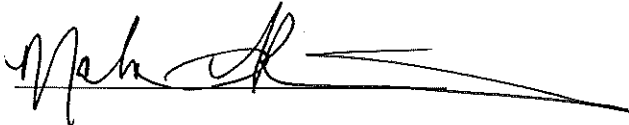
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CITY OF FREEPORT



MAYOR

ATTEST



CITY CLERK

